SPORT ↘06
ALGERIA'S IMANE KHELIF STORMS TO WIN BOXING GOLD AT PARIS OLYMPICS



SPORT ↘07
QATAR'S FARES IBRAHIM VOWS STRONG RETURN AFTER SHOCK EXIT AT PARIS GAMES





Sheikh Joaan meets Los Angeles 2028 Games Organising Committee President



Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) President H E Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani met with the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games Organising Committee President Casey Wasserman, on the sidelines of the Paris 2024 Games, yesterday. QOC Secretary General Jassim bin Rashid Al Buenain also attended the meeting. The discussion was focused on aspects of development and cooperation in the sports sector to further promote the Olympic Movement.

PARIS 2024
MEDALS TABLE

	NOC				
1	China	39	27	24	90
2	United States	38	42	42	122
3	Australia	18	18	14	50
4	Japan	18	12	13	43
5	France	16	24	22	62
6	Great Britain	14	22	27	63
7	South Korea	13	8	9	30
8	Netherlands	13	7	12	32
9	Germany	12	11	8	31
10	Italy	11	13	15	39
11	Canada	9	7	11	27
82	Qatar	0	0	1	1

Barshim claims bronze for another Olympic medal, eyes more glory

> *The legacy I want to leave behind. I have so much to give, maybe now it's my time to give to the next generation and hopefully you'll see the next champion:* ***Mutaz Barshim***

FAWAD HUSSAIN
THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Qatar hero Mutaz Barshim ended his highly-successful Olympic career with a bronze medal, leaping to his season's best of 2.34m in the high jump final at Stade de France yesterday.

New Zealand's Hamish Kerr edged America's McEwen Shelby in a thrilling jump-off to secure gold medal after both failed to go beyond the 2.36m mark, and could not be separated on countback of missed jumps.

For Barshim, it was his record fourth Olympic medal in the men's high jump, having won silver medals at the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Games besides a famous gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago.

He got off to a blazing start clearing 2.22m, 2.27m, 2.31m and 2.34m in his first attempts before failing twice to clear 2.36m. He then raised the bar at 2.38m for his last attempt but failed again to settle for a bronze after defeating Italy's Stefano Sottile on countback.

Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani congratulated Barshim on the historic feat.

"I congratulate our Olympic champion Mutaz Barshim on winning the bronze medal at the Paris 2024 Olympics, to be added to the gold and two silver medals in his Olympic career and other great achievements in international sports competitions. With these successes, he has become an honourable and inspiring sports model for generations in Qatar, who will contribute to raising the name of their country high in the fields of sports," H H the Amir posted on X.

Qatar Olympic Committee President H E Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani also praised Barshim for a bronze medal. "Congratulations to the people of Qatar on the victory of your legendary champion. For your country, you have an honourable performance and immortal achievements," he commented on X.

Qatar great targets more accolades

The 33-year-old, who last month had announced Paris will be his last Olympics, was hoping to make history by becoming the first high jumper to win two Olympic gold medals. He already has an unprecedented three straight world titles to his name.



Qatar's Mutaz Barshim reacts after competing in the men's high jump final. Pictures: AFP

The Qatar great, however, was satisfied with a bronze medal, saying it was an uphill task to be on the podium for four consecutive Olympic Games.

"We are talking about 12 years on the podium, it's not an easy task," said Barshim, who has braved many injuries during his career.

"Alhamdulilah, it was my dream to become an Olympian and [now] I am the Olympic athlete with the most high jump medals," he said before thanking his fans.

"You guys have never disappointed with your support and cheering, this medal is for you, not for me, this medal is for all those who supported me, this medal is for all the fans of Mutaz Barshim."

On his four medals, he commented: "The legacy I want to leave behind. I have so much to give, maybe now it's my time to give to the next generation and hopefully you'll see the next champion."

Barshim confirmed he would continue competing in the forthcoming events after his Olympic swansong.

"I have announced that this was the last Olympic tournament but not the last championship. There are championships the next year, there is a World Indoor Championships in China, outside there is Japan, there is the Asian Games, so possibly yes."

He added he would be ready to share his experience with youngsters after his retirement.

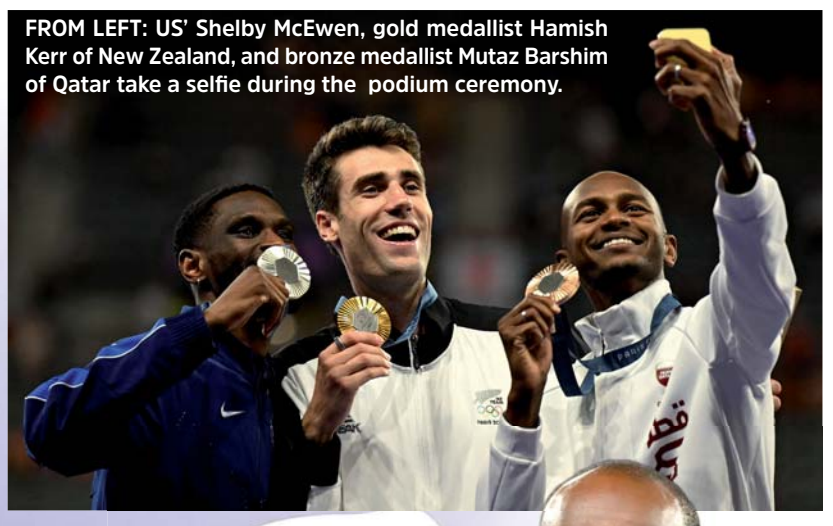
"It does not matter where I am, or about positions. I will share my experience in the right capacity, either as a coach, administrative, consultancy, whatever it may be," he said.

Medals delight Kerr and McEwen

In the jump-off, both Kerr and Shelby failed to clear the heights of 2.38m and 2.36m before the New Zealand athlete sealed the title on 2.34m.

"High jump's always a rollercoaster, there's always guys who will miss and then clear, and then miss," Kerr said.

"The big thing that we've been working on personally, and me and my team, is it's not over until it's over.



FROM LEFT: US' Shelby McEwen, gold medallist Hamish Kerr of New Zealand, and bronze medallist Mutaz Barshim of Qatar take a selfie during the podium ceremony.

"In the past, I probably got into the habit of watching those guys a little bit, whereas now I wouldn't even know what's going on, I just focus on myself."

McEwen said it felt "amazing" to claim a silver medal.

"It's just a blessing and honour to be able to be here completely healthy and get our first Olympic medal (in this event) in a long time," the American said.

"I feed off the crowd, and I jumped my way to a personal best. No better than that."

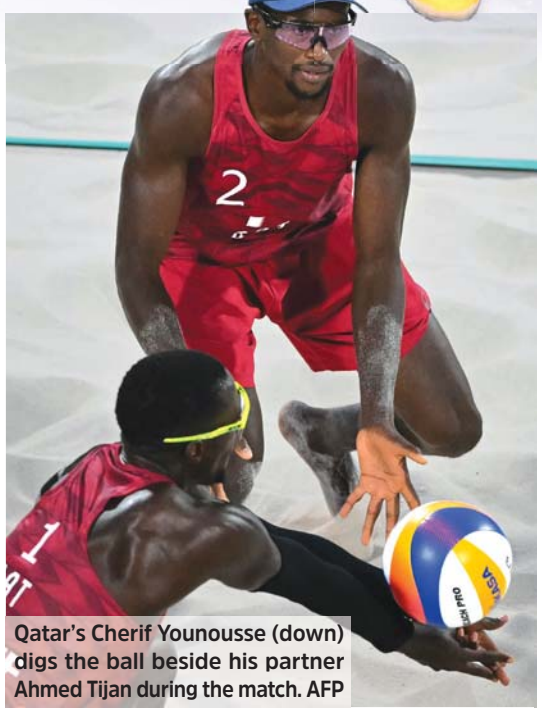
Meanwhile, it was heartbreak for joint Tokyo Olympics champion Gianmarco Tamberi, who was taken to hospital hours before the final.

The Italian, who famously shared gold medal with Barshim at the Tokyo Olympics, clearly looked in discomfort as he failed to clear 2.27m after scaling 2.22m in his final attempt.

"10 hours have passed and the renal colic still hasn't gone away," Tamberi posted on Instagram ahead of the final yesterday. "The pain I have felt since this morning, however strong, is nothing compared to what I am feeling inside."



Qatar's Younousse and Tijan miss podium after defeat in play-off



Qatar's Cherif Younousse (down) digs the ball beside his partner Ahmed Tijan during the match. AFP

CHINTHANA WASALA
THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Qatar's hope of snatching a second medal on the penultimate day of the Paris Olympic Games was dashed when Asia's top beach volleyball duo Cherif Younousse and Ahmed Tijan fell short of a victory in the bronze medal match at the Eiffel Tower Stadium last night.

The Tokyo 2020 bronze winners aimed to make back-to-back appearances on the Olympic podiums. However, it was the Norwegian team of Anders Mol and Christian Sorum who succeeded in winning a medal for a second consecutive time after a strong 2-0 (21-13, 21-16) victory over the Qatari duo.

Mol and Sorum, the gold medalists at the Tokyo Games, outscored the Qatari duo in all elements in the encounter which lasted 36 minutes in front of a packed venue. The second-seeded pair, Mol and Sorum served 4 aces against the Qatari duo while scoring seven block points against Qatar's three. Younousse and Tijan made four serve errors and 13 attack errors in contrast to five by the Norwegian pair who made all the kill blocks in the match.

The earlier half of the first set was a head-to-head battle until Qatar held up through 9-9. However, Mol and Sorum took the lead scoring three points in a row, and extended the gap until the set was closed with an eight-point lead. In the second set, Younousse and Tijan quickly recovered after a three-point deficit to level the score at 8-8. That too, however, wasn't enough as their opponents broke away once again as Sorum scored the winning point to cap a memorable victory for Norway.

The Qatari duo had enjoyed a strong run in the Olympic beach volleyball tournament, dominating the group stage and advancing to the semi-finals in which they went down to Sweden's David Ahman and Jonatan Hellvig.

Meanwhile, in the gold medal match which took place later at the same venue, the world No.1 pair of Ahman and Hellvig defeated Germany's Nils Ehlers and Clemens Wickler in straight sets (21–10, 21–13) to win their country's first ever medal at Olympics in beach volleyball.



Fares vows strong return after shock exit at Paris Games



Qatar's Fares Ibrahim reacts during the men's 102kg weightlifting event. AFP

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Qatar weightlifter Fares Ibrahim has apologised after his bid to claim second successive Olympic gold ended in dismay in the recently-created 102kg class, in Paris yesterday.

The 26-year-old, who was one of Qatar's main medal hopes at the ongoing Games, failed thrice to lift 178kg in snatch that eliminated him from the following clean and jerk category.

Three years ago at the Tokyo Olympics, Fares became Qatar's first-ever gold medalist when he topped the 96kg category, which was not the part of Paris Games.

Yesterday, he blamed a sudden injury for his failure to excel in the tough challenge.

"I apologise for the unexpected performance due to an elbow injury. This is the first time I felt this injury," Fares told beIN Sports.

"But this is not the end. I will return to achieve something in Los Angeles (2028)."

Fares' build up for Paris was challenging as he battled a hip injury before competing in the Games. He also missed the International Weightlifting Federation's World Cup in April due to injury.

Favourite Liu Huanhua of China lived up to expectations winning the 102kg gold yesterday. Liu totalled 406kg, 7kg short of his own world record, for his two lifts in the weight class.

He edged Akbar Djuraev of Uzbekistan by 2kg. Yauheni Tsikhantsou, a Belarusian competing as a neutral athlete, took bronze a further 2kg back.

IOC chief Bach says will not seek third term

PARIS: International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach said at the Paris Games yesterday he will not seek to remain in charge for a third term.

"New times are calling for new leaders," the 70-year-old German, who has been in charge since 2013, told a session of IOC members in the French capital.

Bach said he was asked to stay in his role but insisted he would not attempt to extend his mandate by changing the Olympic charter that limits the president to a maximum of 12 years in the role.

"I know with this decision I am disappointing many of you....but it is in the best interests of our beloved Olympic movement," he said.

His successor will be elected in 2025. The jostling to succeed Bach will now begin, with some well-informed IOC watchers tipping Zimbabwean former swimmer Kirsty Coventry for the role. — ***AFP***

Kipyegon wins third straight Olympic 1,500m gold

PARIS: Kenya's Faith Kipyegon made history yesterday after becoming the first woman to win three consecutive Olympic 1,500m gold medals with a superb display of middle distance running.

The 30-year-old 2016 and 2020 champion produced a tactical masterpiece at the Stade de France to take gold in a new Olympic record of 3min 51.29sec.

Australia's Jessica Hull took silver in 3:52.56 while Britain's Georgia Bell claimed bronze in 3:52.61.

It was another remarkable performance by Kipyegon, the reigning world champion who can now arguably lay claim to being the greatest women's middle-distance runner in history.

Kipyegon had bided her time early in the race, allowing Gudaf Tsegay to set the pace before moving up onto the Ethiopian's shoulder just after the first lap.

Tsegay continued to lead at the bell but faded quickly and dropped back as Kipyegon accelerated into first place.

With 200m to go, Kipyegon kicked for home and though Hull and Bell pursued they never looked liked finding the speed necessary to catch the Kenyan as she scampered across the line to clinch her unprecedented Olympic 1,500m treble.

Meanwhile, world champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen overcame surging Ethiopian team tactics to win the Olympic men's 5,000m.

The Norwegian, who finished fourth in the 1,500m, timed 13min 13.66sec for gold, Kenya's Ronald Kwemoi taking silver in 13:15.04.

American Grant Fisher will return home with two bronzes after rounding out the podium (13:15.13) as he had also done in the 10,000m race. — ***AFP***

Norway's Ingebrigtsen storms to gold in 5,000m

PARIS: World champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen overcame surging Ethiopian team tactics to win the Olympic men's 5,000m in Paris yesterday.

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American Grant Fisher will return home with two bronzes after rounding out the podium (13:15.13) as he had also done in the 10,000m race.

"For me, the 5000m is over triple my usual distance, so it was a very tough race," Ingebrigtsen said.

"With the level being so high, people are running so fast this year, I knew I had to be at my very best to be able to fight for medals.

"I was a little bit locked in on the inside, it opened quite a big gap. I just tried to stay calm, went for it, I was able to catch up.

"It's just an amazing feeling. The contrast in sports is unique: when you succeed, and sometimes you have a bad experience. It's amazing to have this."

The race did not feature defending Olympic champion Joshua Cheptegei, the Ugandan having decided to skip the race after winning 10,000m gold, so missing out on becoming the third man to win back-to-back Olympic gold in the event after Lasse Viren (1972-1976) and Mo Farah (2012-2016). — ***AFP***

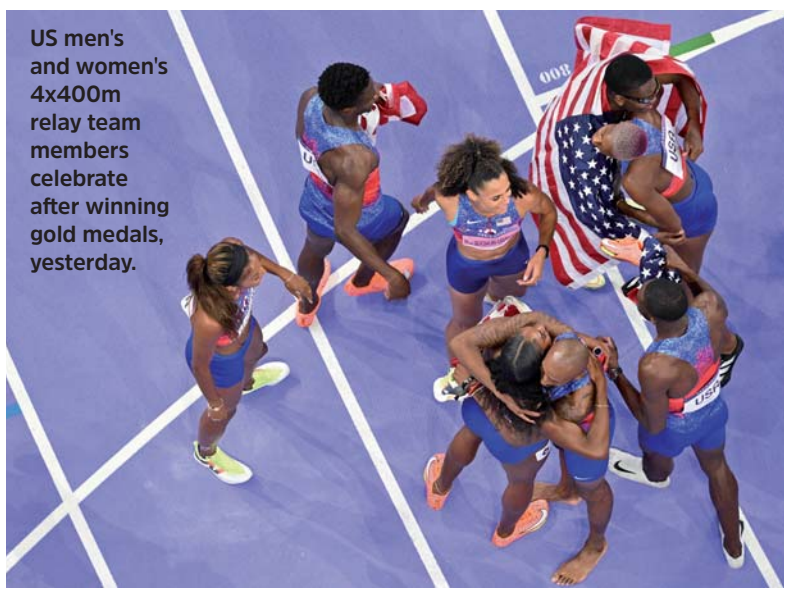
McLaughlin-Levrone and Thomas lead US to relay win, give Americans 34th medal

PARIS: Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone and Gabby Thomas teamed up for America's 14th gold and 34th overall medal at the track yesterday, wrapping up the Olympic action at the Stade de France with a 4.23-second runaway in the women's 4x400 relay.

The gold medalists in the 400 hurdles and 200 meters took care of legs two and three for the United States, handing a 30-meter lead to Alexis Holmes, who didn't lose any ground.

McLaughlin-Levrone, who owns the world's fourth-fastest time in the 400 to go with her latest world record in hurdles, ran her leg in 47.71. That was .91 seconds faster than the next fastest woman in the field, Femke Bol, who took the Netherlands to silver. The US finished in 3 minutes, 15.27 seconds, only .1 short of the world record set by the Soviet Union in 1988.

The 34 track medals were the most for the US at a non-boycotted Games since the early 20th century, when there were more events and fewer countries. The 14 golds are the most in a non-boycotted Olympics since Bob Beamon, Tommie Smith and John Carlos led the US to 15 wins in 1968.



US men's and women's 4x400m relay team members celebrate after winning gold medals, yesterday.

No other country had more than Kenya's four golds at the track. Kenya and Britain tied for second behind the US with 10 total medals apiece

Moments before the women's race, there was more tension involving the men. Rai Benjamin, the 400 hurdles gold medalist held off 200 champion Letsile Tebogo to give the United States a .1-second win over Botswana - the final thriller in a nine-day meet full of them. The US had earlier equaled its medal total of 32 from the Rio Games when high jumper Shelby McEwen won a surprise silver medal after losing a drawn-out tiebreaker to New Zealand's Hamish Kerr, who celebrated by diving into the thankfully inactive javelin landing zone.

Wanyonyi of Kenya wins men's 800 in another race decided by .01 second In a speedy men's 800 Kenya's Emmanuel Wanyonyi beat Canada's Marco Arop by .01 seconds in a photo finish, finishing in 1:41.19, only .28 off the world record. American Bryce Hoppel's national record of 1:41.67 was only good for fourth.

Ingebrigtsen gets a win, this one in the 5,000 Jakob Ingebrigtsen won the 5,000 meters in a relatively drama-free race after much-hyped 1,500 four nights earlier against Britain's Josh Kerr turned into a disappointing fourth -place finish.

Ingebrigtsen won in 13 minutes, 13.66 seconds to add this title to wins at the last two world championships. Kenya's Ronald Kwemoi finished second and Grant Fisher of the US finished third. — ***AP***

Ethiopia's Tola wins men's marathon, Kipchoge drops out

PARIS: Ethiopian Tamirat Tola delivered a masterclass in solo front running to win the Olympic men's marathon in Paris yesterday as Eliud Kipchoge's bid for a third gold went up in smoke.

Tola clocked an Olympic record of 2hr 06min 26sec for victory, finishing 21 seconds ahead of Belgium's Bashir Abdi, whose silver marked an upgrade from his bronze garnered at the Covid-hit Tokyo Games three years ago. Kenya's Benson Kipruto, winner of Tokyo, Boston and Chicago marathons in recent years, rounded out the podium, a further 13sec adrift.

"Thank you, Paris!" said Tola, the 2016 Olympic 10,000m bronze medallist who will be 33 on Sunday.



Ethiopia's Tamirat Tola crosses the finish line to win the men's marathon.

"I'm happy today, I was 2022 world champion and now I'm Olympic champion. "It's the greatest day in my life. This was my goal." Tola, a late call-up to replace injury-hit Sisay Lemma, won gold at the 2022 world championships in Eugene. More recently he finished third at last year's London Marathon and won the New York City Marathon in a course record of 2:04.58.

"I was the reserve in the Ethiopian team, but when Sisay had injuries, then I had a chance to represent him," Tola said.

"I was fully prepared and knew I could fulfil my dream. This is the Olympics and it is not easy to win the Olympic Games, not at all. I am very proud, very happy."

Former world record holder Kipchoge won golds in the 2016 Rio Games and in Tokyo in 2021, but the 39-year-old Kenyan pulled up late in the race with back pain.

He dropped out just after the 30km mark, at which point he was 71st, more than eight minutes off the pace.

It put an end to his ambitious attempt at a third consecutive win.

In scenes witnessed by an AFP reporter in the crowd, Kipchoge turned to fans and handed over his shoes, bib and socks to supporters, receiving a rapturous reception.

Tola's teammate Kenenisa Bekele, who won three Olympic and five world golds over 5000m and 10,000m before turning to the marathon, finished 39th in 2:12.24.

The 42km-long marathon course headed out of central Paris on a loop to Versailles, mimicking a key moment from the French Revolution: the Women's March on Versailles, on 5 October 1789 which led to French King Louis XVI finally agreeing to ratify the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizens.

The route included a 436m climb and 438m descent. The maximum gradient on the route was 13.5 percent. — ***AFP***



Ethiopia's Tamirat Tola runs past the Eiffel Tower during the men's marathon.



Modesty the aim for Turkiye's shooting sensation

ANKARA: Yusuf Dikec may have an Olympic medal and a legion of adoring online fans, but the Turkish pistol sharpshooter is aiming to keep his feet on the ground.

Shots of the athlete cocking his pistol with nonchalance, his silver medal in Paris earned with his off hand in his pocket and no protective glasses or headphones, went viral around the world.

But in spite of his newfound internet fame, Dikec insisted that he was "the same man".

"The day after our silver medal, everyone was talking to me about the number of times my photos were shared on social networks," Dikec told AFP.

"But it doesn't matter to me. I'll continue my life as before," he said.

The master marksman's relaxed pose, widely imitated by his fellow athletes, has become associated with victory with many of his Olympic peers.

Even Elon Musk, the billionaire founder of Tesla and SpaceX, has shared a video of himself striking the stance, viewed 170 million times.

Dikec's self-confidence and sangfroid have inspired a flood of online memes.

"The name's Dikec. Yusuf Dikec," said posts by some users in reference to cinema spy icon James Bond.

Other memes added a cigarette to his mouth, emphasising his casual posture, while others put Dikec as a character in the seminal action film "The Matrix".

But for the 51-year-old, the real prize was winning Turkiye's first medal in the mixed-team 10m air pistol with teammate Sevval Ilayda Tarhan.

Dikec said there was a natural explanation for his apparently casual approach to his discipline.

"Some people thought my hand in my pocket was a sign of arrogance. They don't know anything about me or about shooting sports," he said with a laugh.

"I only do it to keep my body more stable, to keep my balance. There's nothing more to it," he added.

And as a former member of the security forces who retired a year ago, Dikec prefers to shoot without protective equipment.

"As I shoot with my eyes open, I don't feel comfortable with glasses, headphones or any other accessories. That's why I don't use them," he explained.

Most pistol shooters keep one eye closed or obscured, making Dikec something of a rarity in the sport.

His preferences are shared by teammate Tarhan, who also shoots hand-in-pocket and eschews all gear bar headphones and a visor.

Some social media users suggested she should get the same attention as her male partner.

The 24-year-old began shooting for sport at the age of 15, dreaming of one day becoming a policewoman or a soldier.

"We've just shown the world that you can be successful without needing any equipment," the markswoman said.

For Dikec, rather than self-confidence, his stance symbolises the Olympic spirit, which he called "beautiful and natural".

But his seemingly effortless technique is also the result of 24 years of intense shooting since his days in the security forces, winning numerous world and European championships before the Games. To prepare for Paris, he trained for at least four hours a day six days a week over the span of a year. Dikec regrets just missing out on the gold medal he hopes to win at the 2028 Games in Los Angeles.

"We are one of the best teams in the world, I can even say we are the best," Dikec said.

"We've worked so hard that we've broken an Olympic record. We were just out of luck on the day of the final." For him, there is no substitute for hard work and passion.

"I even told Elon Musk," he said, recalling a conversation he had with the billionaire on X after Musk shared a video of him.

"I asked him if robots could win a medal with their hand in their pocket," Dikec said.

"I don't think so, because there are things that neither technology nor money can achieve, because they require heart." — *AFP*



Turkish shooter Yusuf Dikec in action.

Algeria's Khelif storms to memorable boxing gold

PARIS: Algerian boxer Imane Khelif defied a major gender controversy to win gold at the Paris Olympics in front of a pulsating Roland Garros crowd that roared her to victory.

Khelif claimed a unanimous points decision win over China's Yang Liu in the women's 66kg final and was paraded around the arena on a team member's shoulders.

Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting, who together with Khelif was disqualified from last year's world championships after failing gender eligibility testing, fights in the women's 57kg final.

"I'm very happy. For eight years this has been my dream and I'm now the Olympic champion and gold medallist," said Khelif, 25.

"I've worked for eight years, no sleep, eight years tired. Now I'm Olympic champion."

There were large numbers of Algerian fans at the 15,000-seat Court Philippe Chatrier, usually home to Grand Slam tennis but instead there to witness one of the most controversial athletes at the Games.

Standing 1.79 metres (5ft 9in), Khelif had enjoyed a height and strength advantage over the three opponents she comfortably dismantled on her way to the final.

Yang was a different proposition, the 32-year-old being nearly as tall and having pedigree as a world champion.

Loud cheers went up when Khelif entered the arena, shadow-boxing her way towards the ring as chants of "Imane, Imane" rang out.

Khelif dictated most of the first round from the centre of the ring and unloaded a flurry of punches on Yang two-thirds of the way through to take the early initiative.

The second round started in the same way, with Khelif's punches appearing to carry more snap, power and menace.

The Algerian was ahead on all the judges' scorecards heading into the third and final round, and she just needed to avoid serious trouble to claim gold.

The two embraced at the bell, and after Khelif's comprehensive victory was confirmed, she did a jig in the centre of the ring and thumped her chest.

"I want to thank all the people who have come to support me," said Khelif, after winning her country's second gold in Paris.

"All the people from Algeria and all the people at my base. I want to thank all the team, my coach. Thank you so much."

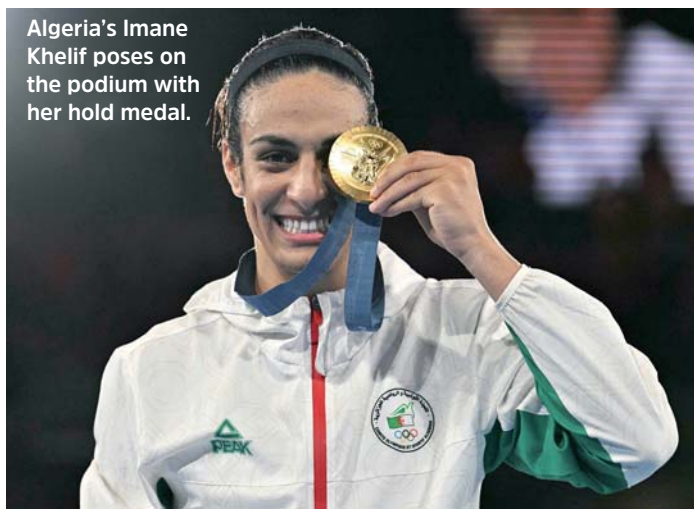
Khelif and Lin both fought at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago but there was no controversy at the time and neither won a medal.

Both were thrown out of last year's world championships, which was run by the Russian-led International Boxing Association (IBA), but were cleared to compete in Paris.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has overseen the sport at the Games because of concerns over the IBA's running of boxing, including questions over its finances, ethics and judging of bouts. — *AFP*



Algeria's Imane Khelif (left) and China's Yang Liu compete in the women's 66kg boxing final.


Algeria's Imane Khelif poses on the podium with her hold medal.

Kenya's Chebet wins 10,000m for second gold of Games

PARIS: Kenya's Beatrice Chebet won Olympic women's 10,000m gold in Paris, adding to her 5,000m crown to again scupper the hopes of defending champion Sifan Hassan.

The world record holder, making her Olympic debut, clocked a winning time of 30min 43.25sec at a packed Stade de France.

Italy's Nadia Battocletti claimed silver in a national record of 30:43.35, while Hassan took a second bronze of the Games after also bagging third place in the 5,000m. Chebet shattered the world record in the 25-lap event earlier this season, running a startling 28:54.14 in Eugene to become the first woman to break the 29-minute barrier.

Her victory in Paris leaves Hassan staring at Sunday's marathon as her sole chance to depart France with a gold.

"To do the 5,000m and 10,000m is not something easy," said Chebet, who added that her strategy was "just focus, and know that you can achieve. Just believe in yourself.

"I believed that I can do it. I just wanted to win the 10,000m for my country. My country has never won a gold medal (in the women's 10,000m). So I said I wanted to be the first woman to win a gold medal in the 10,000m." — *AFP*


China's Cao Yuan in action.

China complete diving clean sweep

PARIS: China completed a historic clean sweep of all eight Olympic diving gold medals after Cao Yuan won the men's 10m platform final in Paris yesterday.

The diving powerhouse went one better than at the Tokyo Games three years ago when they claimed seven of the eight golds.

Defending champion Cao was a class above his rivals.

He finished on 547.50 points, with Japan's Rikuto Tamai on 507.65 to claim silver and Briton Noah Williams (497.35) the bronze medal.

Cao became the first to retain his Olympic 10m crown since American Greg Louganis in Seoul 1988.

After three of the six-dive final, Cao was being hard pressed by Japanese teenager Tamai.

But Tamai, only 17, flopped on his fifth and penultimate effort to clear Cao's path to the top of the podium and a place in his country's diving history.

The Beijing-born 29 year-old was securing his fourth Olympic gold in all after also winning the men's 3m springboard at Rio 2016 and the men's synchronised 10m platform title in London four years earlier.

It wasn't all smiles though in the Chinese corner on the final day of the diving as world champion Yang Hao had a bad day at the office, trailing in last of the 12 finalists over 150 points behind his compatriot.

That was a rare reverse though for China and for those left in their wake at the 2024 Games there was nothing but awe at their rivals' perfection in Paris.

"I'm always clapping their dives," said Britain's Andrea Spendolini-Sirieix after taking bronze to teenage duo of Quan Hongchan and Chen Yuxi in the women's synchronised 10m platform.

"Just watch their dives -- they go in the water like they are sleeping" she marvelled.

The Olympic diving programme swelled to its current programme of eight finals at the 2000 Sydney Games with the inclusion of the synchronised version for the springboard and platform events. — *AFP*

Jokic triple-double helps Serbia secure bronze

PARIS: Nikola Jokic recorded a triple-double as Serbia defeated Germany 93-83 to claim Olympic men's basketball bronze yesterday, avenging their loss in last year's World Cup final.

Jokic scored 19 points to go along with 12 rebounds and 11 assists as Serbia came away with consolation medals after their heartbreaking semi-final loss to the United States.

Three-time NBA MVP Jokic sat out the 2023 World Cup as Germany won the title for the first time, but with the Denver Nuggets star present in Paris the Serbians snatched the final podium spot.


Serbia's Nikola Jokic (left) and Germany's Moritz Wagner in action during the bronze medal match.

For Jokic it was a second Olympic medal, adding to the silver he won as part of the Serbia team at the 2016 Rio Games. Bogdan Bogdanovic, who had 16 points, was also a member of that squad.

Vasilije Micic matched Jokic with 19 points as six Serbia players hit double figures in a game they controlled from start to finish.

"It's a huge, huge success to win a bronze medal at the Olympics," said Bogdanovic.

"Of course there is some sadness behind that game against the USA, but we cannot go backwards. We can only be proud about what we achieved today."

Franz Wagner scored 18 points for Germany. His elder brother Moritz contributed 16 while Dennis Schroder -- the hero of their World Cup triumph -- was limited to 13. "Everybody is obviously heartbroken," said Schroder. "Everybody's unhappy right now, but we're going to look forward."

Serbia held a 46-38 edge at half-time and built a 19-point advantage in the third period as Germany tried to stay within range. After blowing a 13-point cushion heading into the final quarter against the US, Serbia made sure there was no repeat letdown this time as they denied Germany a first Olympic basketball medal. — *AFP*

Al Shamal stun Al Sadd; Al Duhail claim big win

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Baghdad Bounedjah struck twice against his old club as Al Shamal stunned holders Al Sadd 2-1 to start their Ooredoo Stars League (QSL) campaign on a high note.

Also yesterday, Kenyan striker Michael Olunga netted a hat-trick to propel Al Duhail to a 6-1 thrashing over Qatar SC.

Bounedjah, who left Al Sadd ahead of the new season, scored in 31st and 74th minutes as Al Shamal walked away with three points in their opening match at Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium.

An own-goal by Jeison Murillo helped Al Sadd reduced the lead in the 89th minute.

At the Khalifa International Stadium, Olunga scored a hat-trick for The Red Knights with goals in 41st, 44th and 90+6 minutes, while Ismail Mohammed got a brace scoring in the 69th and 82nd minutes. Abdullah Al Ahrak found the back of the net in the 85th minute.

Al Duhail captain Almoez Ali was involved in three of his team's goals by providing assists.


Al Shamal's Baghdad Bounedjah (centre) celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal against Al Sadd. PIC: RAJAN VADAKKEMURIYIL / THE PENINSULA

Qatar SC's consolation goal was fetched by their Congolese professional Ben Malango in the 64th minute. Today, Al Wakrah will meet Al Ahli at Al Janoub Stadium while Al Shahania will face the challenge of Al Arabi at Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium.


Al Duhail's Michael Olunga celebrates after the match.

Manchester City edge United on penalties to win Community Shield

LONDON: Manchester City avenged their FA Cup final defeat to Manchester United to lift the Community Shield 7-6 on penalties yesterday, after a 1-1 draw at Wembley.

The game exploded into life in the final 10 minutes as Alejandro Garnacho gave United the lead before Bernardo Silva levelled in the 89th minute.

Pep Guardiola's men then edged a marathon shoot-out as Jadon Sancho and Jonny Evans failed to score for United.

City have won the Premier League for a record four consecutive seasons but it is the first time in that run that they have won the season opener after defeats to Leicester, Liverpool and Arsenal in the past three years.

The English champions were severely hampered by the absence of a series of key players due to their late return to pre-season after competing at Euro 2024 and the Copa America.

City's England trio of Kyle Walker, John Stones and Phil Foden, as well as Spain midfielder Rodri are yet to return to training following their efforts in reaching the final of Euro 2024.

By contrast, United boss Erik ten Hag showed his desperation to win more silverware by thrusting teenager Kobbie Mainoo straight back into the heart of the action after his starring role for England in Germany.



Manchester City's players and officials celebrate after their win over Manchester United yesterday.

Despite also leaving Kevin De Bruyne and Silva on the bench, City controlled the game early on with the electric Jeremy Doku causing havoc down the left.

James McAtee could be handed his chance to shine this season by Pep Guardiola with Julian Alvarez set to join Atletico Madrid.

And McAtee, who spent last season on loan at Sheffield United, was inches away from making his mark with a curling effort that came back off the post midway through the first half.

Ten Hag's job is widely believed to have been saved by beating City back in May and he will feel his side should have got the better of their rivals once more.

United were being starved of possession but still managed to create the better of the chances.

Amad Diallo should have gone for goal himself rather than trying to square to Bruno Fernandes with the goal gaping as half-time approached.

Fernandes started in an unfamiliar centre-forward role due to the absence of Rasmus Hojlund through injury and a lack of match fitness for Joshua Zirkzee.

The United captain thought he had opened the scoring with a stunning strike on the hour mark that was ruled out for offside.

Garnacho was introduced for the final half-hour and brought more pace and invention to the United attack. The Argentine teed up Marcus Rashford, who could only hit the post with just Ederson to beat.

Garnacho thought he had won the game on 82 minutes as he jinked inside the City defence and fired low into the corner.

However, City rallied and levelled in the final minute of the 90 when Oscar Bobb's cross was headed in by Silva. The Portuguese midfielder was then the first to miss in the shoot-out as his effort was saved by Andre Onana.

Sancho, though, experienced more penalty woe at Wembley after missing in the final of Euro 2020 for England. His spot-kick was brilliantly saved by Ederson, who then fired in himself to keep City alive. Evans gave City the chance to win it when he blazed over.

And it was a tale of redemption for Manuel Akanji, whose saved penalty cost Switzerland in their Euros quarter-final against England, as the centre-back stroked home the winner. — ***AFP***

Spurs splash out for Solanke in £65m deal

LONDON: Tottenham bolstered their attacking options for the new Premier League season with the signing of striker Dominic Solanke from Bournemouth in a deal that could reach £65m ($83m).

The 26-year-old has signed a six-year contract and will cost an initial £55m with a further £10m in add-ons.

Solanke, who began his career at Chelsea and also had a short spell at Liverpool, arrived at Bournemouth in 2019 and enjoyed his best goalscoring season in 2023/24 with 19 Premier League goals.

He is expected to be present for yesterday's friendly with Bayern Munich at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

If Tottenham end up paying the full fee, Solanke will become their record signing.

Spurs resisted the temptation to sign a striker 12 months ago when Harry Kane departed for Bayern Munich.

Solanke will now hope to fire Ange Postecoglou's men back into the Champions League after they finished fifth in the Premier League last season.

Bournemouth owner Bill Foley had confirmed earlier this summer that Solanke's contract included a release clause in the region of £65m and his exit is a club record sale, bettering the £40m they received for Nathan Ake from Manchester City in 2020.

"After Dominic's performances for us - in particular his impressive 2023-24 season - it has come as no surprise that a team of Tottenham's calibre has shown an interest," said Bournemouth's chief executive Neill Blake.

"His development since arriving in 2019 is a credit to his work rate and endeavour, as well as the platform AFC Bournemouth gives young talent to grow.

"We're pleased to secure a club-record fee for Dominic and he also leaves with everyone's sincere well wishes at AFC Bournemouth." — ***AFP***

Creevy rolls back the years as Argentina stun All Blacks

WELLINGTON: Stalwart Agustin Creevy scored the decisive try as an inspired Argentina stunned New Zealand 38-30 in their Rugby Championship Test in Wellington yesterday.

The Pumas scored four tries to three to notch just their third-ever win over New Zealand, with 39-year-old hooker Creevy putting the visitors in front when he crossed late in the game to hand All Blacks coach Scott Robertson his first defeat.

Robertson's tenure opened with two tense home wins over England last month but he conceded "we weren't good enough" as they faltered late against the committed Pumas, after leading 20-15 at half-time.

Argentina won the physical exchanges in the second half, their forward pack superbly led by flanker and captain Pablo Matera.

Pumas fly-half Santiago Carreras kept the scoreboard ticking over, landing seven of eight shots at goal for an 18-point haul, including a penalty in the dying minutes to extend Argentina's lead to eight points and seal a famous victory.


Argentina's Agustin Creevy (left) and Pablo Matera celebrate their team's victory.

All Blacks fly-half Damian McKenzie kicked 15 points and set up two tries but his side were guilty of too many mistakes against opponents who feasted on errors.

It continues a nightmare run of results for the All Blacks at Wellington's Sky Stadium venue, where they haven't won any of their last five Tests, dating back to 2018.

Lucio Cinti responded with a try for Argentina after midfield partner Santiago Chocobares sliced through the defence on the halfway line.

McKenzie and Carreras traded penalties before McKenzie's deft pass put Waikato Chiefs team-mate Anton Lienert-Brown outside a defender to score.

Winger Mateo Carreras lifted the Pumas within five points on the stroke of half-time, pouncing when a high kick was batted back loosely by the All Blacks to dart over.

Argentina snatched the lead two minutes after the interval when lock Franco Molina powered over from a lineout drive for his first Test try.

Winger Mark Tele'a crossed to put the All Blacks 30-25 ahead nearing the final quarter.

But Argentina finished the stronger, with Test centurion Creevy powering over next to the posts in one of the highlights of his 18-year career with the Pumas. — ***AFP***

US top seed Gauff upset by Shnaider in Toronto

TORONTO: Reigning US Open champion Coco Gauff was upset by Russia's Diana Shnaider 6-4, 6-1 on Friday in a third-round match at the WTA Canadian Open.

Shnaider captured her first match against a top-10 rival in winning the meeting of 20-year-olds with world number two Gauff, the US top seed who was ousted in a bid for her eighth career WTA title.

"I tried to play it cool, but inside I was like, 'Yes, I made it," said Shnaider.

Asked how she pulled off the stunner, Shnaider replied, "Honestly I still don't know. It was a little bit tough conditions. It was very windy but I'm very glad I managed to overcome it."

The 24th-ranked Russian seeks her fourth WTA title of the year after Thailand, Bad Homburg and Budapest.

Shnaider, in her first WTA Masters level round of 16 match, needed only 70 minutes to dispatch Gauff and book a quarter-final against Russian sixth seed Liudmila Samsonova, who eliminated Belgium's Elise Mertens 6-2, 6-4.


Diana Shnaider hits a shot against Coco Gauff during their match.

Shnaider broke Gauff in the 10th game to capture the opening set and the American double-faulted away a break to hand Shnaider a 3-1 lead in the second set and never recovered.

"I didn't have high expectations, but I wish I could have competed better today, even if it resulted in a loss. I don't think I competed well."

Gauff will play next week at Cincinnati, where she is the defending champion, in the final major tuneup for the US Open.

US third seed and defending champion Jessica Pegula defeated compatriot Ashlyn Krueger 6-2, 6-4 to reach a quarter-final against another American, Peyton Stearns, who advanced 6-4, 4-2 when 12th seed Victoria Azarenka retired.

Another all-US quarter-final will send eighth seed Emma Navarro against Taylor Townsend.

Navarro defeated Ukraine's 11th seed Marta Kostyuk 7-5, 7-5 while Townsend upset Latvian fourth seed Jelena Ostapenko 6-2, 6-1.

Two-time reigning Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka hit 24 winners to eliminate Britain's Katie Boulter 6-3, 6-3. — ***AFP***